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REMARKS
by
U.S. AMBASSADOR DAN MOZENA
AT THE CERTIFICATE GIVING CEREMONY OF THE
WOMEN JOURNALISTS TRAINING PROGRAM
THE AMERICAN CENTER, DHAKA
JUNE 3, 2012

DHAKA, JUNE 3 -- U.S. Ambassador Dan Mozena delivered the following remarks at the handing out ceremony of the women journalists training program organized by the News Network and funded by the American Center, U.S. Embassy, Dhaka.

(Begin text)

Shahiduzzaman, Editor of News Network and our gracious host

Enayetullah Khan, Managing Director and Chief Editor, UNB

Syed Fahim Munaim, Chief Editor and CEO, Maasranga Television

Khaled Mohiuddin, Chief News Editor, Independent TV

Zaglul Chowdhury, Advisory Editor, Financial Express

Asalaam m'laikum and good morning

Something very special happened last Tuesday ...

Something that bodes well for the future of journalism in Bangladesh ... and the future of democracy in Bangladesh.

...it was at the Ruposhi Bangla ...

...I was on the dais as a speaker at an event celebrating the Right To Information Act

...as I looked out over the crowd and the large herd of journalists, I saw this amazing thing ...

...I saw that two of the TV cameras were operated by women,

...I saw that another woman was taking stills,

... I saw women journalists busily scribbling away in their pads.

I had never before seen so many women working the journalist's beat ...

It was a beautiful sight ...

And today we are doing a beautiful thing ...

We are acknowledging the hard work and bravery of twenty young women who strive to break into the male-dominated world of journalism.

I say bravery because each of these young women has faced and overcome opposition ...

...opposition from those who would not accord women their rightful voice in all walks of life ...

...opposition to the very idea of women becoming journalists.

I say hard work because these young women had three months of intensive training in the principles of journalism, followed by tough six-month internships at various print and television media outlets here in Dhaka, many of which are represented here today.

These young women promise to bring a fresh, new perspective ... that of a woman ... to Bangladeshi journalism ...

...this is a very good thing ...

... good for each of our graduates today,

...good for strengthening the journalism profession in Bangladesh,

... and good for making journalism an ever more effective watchdog of Bangladesh's democracy.

Every week I answer questions on Facebook.

On Friday, I was asked how can Bangladesh strengthen its democracy?

I responded that the best way to build a strong democracy is to strengthen the pillars of democracy, starting with the media.

I believe a responsible media with a powerful tradition of investigative reporting ...

...shining the light into the dark corners of corruption, ineptness, laziness, incompetence ...

...is essential, absolutely essential, to building a strong democracy.

I am proud that America ... through the American Center ... has funded this 9 month program to train these 20 new women journalists;

I thank Shahiduzzaman for his commitment in implementing this program to help bring more women into journalism;

And I thank the editors and media heads for making meaningful internships available to these budding journalists, so they could learn the skills of their new trade the best way possible ... on the job.

To our newest journalists, these twenty young women ...

I remind you that you bear a heavy responsibility, the trust of the public to hold accountable those in positions of authority and power ...

...as you bear this burden, you must, as I am sure you will, hold yourself to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.

As I close, I congratulate each of you for your success in finishing this course, and I wish you all the very best as you embark on this exciting new profession, one critical to building the Golden Bangladesh of our dreams.

Thank you.

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As prepared for delivery

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